

St. Marys Downtown Development Authority (DDA)
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Meeting Minutes for November 7, 2011

The regular meeting of the St. Marys DDA was called to order by Lomis at 9:00 am.

Members Present: Charlie Smith, Cheri Richter, John Morrissey, Gary Straight, Jim Lomis, Terry Landreth, and Craig Root

Members not Present: N/A

Guest in attendance: Angela Wigger; St. Marys Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB), Councilman Keith Post, and Christine Daniel; Camden County Chamber of Commerce, Sheila McNeill

Staff: Artie Jones, III; Director, Renée Coakley; Executive Assistant

Lomis welcomed new board member Gary Straight to the meeting as well as the guests in attendance.

Minutes: The board reviewed the October 3, 2011 meeting minutes. Minutes were approved with a motion by Root and a second by Smith. All were in favor of the motion.

Treasurers Report: Smith presented the city financial report and the DDA statements and noted his appreciation in the support of the DDA with the local Economic Development Summit recently. The board also discussed the \$620,000 land fixed asset line item on the DDA balance sheet and requested to determine if that item should be listed at market value. AJ will speak with the City Manager regarding this line item. The financials were approved with a motion by Smith and second by Richter. All were in favor.

Landreth entered the meeting at 9:08 am.

Additions to the Agenda: There were no additions to the agenda but Morrissey requested that AJ give updates on the financial programs that were introduced at the October board meeting to the city council beginning in December.

BUSINESS DISCUSSION:

Promotions Committee: Spirit of 1812/Jazz in the Park: Richter mentioned the Jazz in the Park is scheduled for November 26th and is fully underwritten by Dominos and Coca Cola. There is currently a signed contract with the jazz group that will be performing. The event is sponsored by the DDA, Dominos and Camden Printing. This event will be a donation only event and will be cancelled if the weather is inclement. Richter asked the DDA if they would provide a case of water for the jazz performers and also the use of the golf cart the day of the event if needed. The board agreed to the requests.

Economic Development Committee: Nothing to report.

Design Committee: Boat Ramp Kiosk: AJ mentioned that the proposed design of enclosing this structure will be completed after city public works crews complete Christmas Light installation.

Sea Air Space Trade Show: Sheila spoke to the board about the upcoming trade show April 16-18 that will expose Camden County to hundreds in April of 2012. Sheila requested that the Joint Development Director and the Economic Development Directors from the three cities attend and man the booth that will be constructed by the Georgia Department of Economic Development. All fees have been covered by a grant and the DDA would only be responsible for AJ's travel costs. Sheila requested that AJ work with the JDA and city of Kingsland Director to create a budget for these costs.

Film Alliance: Nothing to report.

Tourism: Wigger mentioned that the Wounded Warriors event went well. The following events are listed on the tourism calendar: Downtown Merchants Open House, the White Lighting Ceremony on November 29th, the December 3rd Tour of Homes, Christmas in the Park and the Live Nativity on December 13th. There will also be several performances of 'Twas the Night... by the St. Marys Little Theatre.

St. Marys Intracoastal Gateway (SMIG): Morrissey reported that the committee met and approved the recommendation for the demolition of the building at the site and removal of the swimming pool. Council also approved the work to be completed by city public works crews. The item was placed on the November 7th council agenda to revisit after several citizens raised concerns.

DIRECTORS REPORT:

Waterfront Park Community Market: AJ mentioned that he has been working on a plan to have the rv storage facility currently at the SMIG property moved to an open location of city owned property at the Waterfront Park. After discussion with the Public Works director, it was determined that the relocating of this structure is not cost effective. The Public Works director is working to determine the cost to construct a structure of this type. AJ will update the board at a future meeting on the status. Smith asked AJ to consider the city property on the corner of St. Marys Street and Bartlett Street.

Wayfinding: AJ mentioned that a grant was applied for this project and the city is currently waiting on the response. An Adhoc committee has been formed to complete the St. Marys portion of this project and once complete the information will be combined with the other cities and the county in order for signage to be uniform throughout the county. The Adhoc committee will meet directly after the DDA board meeting.

Georgia Florida Renewable Energy Expo (GFREE): AJ mentioned that he was approached with the possibility of St. Marys hosting the GFREE expo in March of 2012. The committee for GFREE was looking at Waycross as an optional location but was hoping to keep the event local.

The event will highlight speakers and exhibitors of renewable energy products and could possibly aid in bringing new business to the area. AJ has completed the proposal and will update the board once a determination is made.

Businesses and Updates: Enterprise Zone: AJ presented documentation on an Enterprise Zone to the board. AJ is currently working on creating an Enterprise Zone for St. Marys as another Economic Development Tool for businesses. To qualify the applying city has to meet three of the five criteria and AJ has determined that St. Marys meets the pervasive property criteria, the unemployment rate and the underdevelopment criteria evidenced by the lack of building permits, licenses, land disturbance permits, etc. If the designation is received, a business would receive the incentives agreed upon by city council. AJ will work with the City Manager to determine which incentives should be requested of council. Once agreed upon and approved by council, the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) would be notified to add the city of St. Marys to their state registry of approved Enterprise Zones. **Georgia Cities:** AJ mentioned that St. Marys has been chosen as a stop for the 2012 Heart and Soul bus Tour. On April 19th dignitaries from around the state of GA will arrive for a 90 minute tour of St. Marys best features. There is a guideline that was provided of things that need to be done for this event. Lomis mentioned the possibility of having the group board a boat at the Meeting Street pier and take a short boat ride/tour to the SMIG property where they would depart the boat and board the bus out of town. AJ will look into the logistics of this happening for the tour.

Post mentioned to the board that Orange Hall has been selected as one of the top 10 places in peril by the Historic Trust. This will give much needed exposure of the property and the City of St. Marys all over the state of Georgia.

Daniel mentioned to the board the December Business after Hours on the 8th at 5 pm. Express Scripts will be hosting the event at their site and it will be an RSVP only event.

Adjourn – Meeting adjourned at 10:27 am with a motion by Smith and second by Richter.

Charlie Smith, Secretary

Prepared by Renée Coakley, Executive Assistant